1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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861 The complete *gotul* organization is a feature of Muria and not of Hill Maria culture. But as it has extended to Padalibhum and Nurbhum (possibly also to parts of Tapalibhum and Behra Mar) among the Hill Marias, a brief account of its salient features will not be out of place; it may be expected to spread into the hills with the gradual improvement of communications. A fairly full account from my notes on the Murias has been printed in the *Census of India* 1931 *Report*, Vol. I, Part III B., pp. 81-3. It may be added that it is easier for the Marias of Padalbhum to copy their Muria neighbours because Padalibhum not only has two or three villages which are not Padali villages but belong to the Nuroti and Usendi clans, but even in Padali villages has settlers of these two clans, which are *akomama* (wife-clan) to them.

[858] Boys and girls of an age to visit the *gotul* dormitories are known as *leyur* and *leyas* respectively. All the boys assemble at the 857 dormitory in the evening for dancing, games and social and sexual 571 training, sleeping on there after the departure of the girls to their homes late in the night. The girls attend at the dormitory in the 864 evening, each girl being paired off with a boy of an *akomama* clan. The girls have to comb their boys' hair and massage their arms and legs, to dance with them, and to be initiated into the mysteries of sex with them. Marriage frequently follows these dormitory unions, but by no means always does. Children are expected to attend the dormitory from the age of eleven or twelve, and the parents may be fined for not sending them. Every boy and girl has a special dormitory name or rank; the smaller children have designations which are little more than names, but those of the elder boys change as they are promoted, and involve special duties. The Hill Marias seem to have adopted the ranks for the boys only, the girls retaining the name given them on their entry until they leave the dormitory organization on marriage, but taking among their fellows the precedence of their boy-mates in the dormitory. In Padalibhum the head boy of the dormitory is always known as [171] the *leyur-gaita*, and below him the *gotul* officials are the *leyur-majhi*, the *silledar*, the *jaliarsi*, the *laharu*, the *baiddar* and the *kamdar*; of these, *silledar*, *baiddar* and *kamdar* are Hindi terms copied from the titles of State or zamindari servants; in many a Muria dormitory all the office-holders have such designations instead of the old native names. Besides these names or designations to which [551] special duties and privileges are attached, they have for the boys the names Jalka, Jolsai and Joria, and probably others. The girls' dormitory names ascertained were Jaliaru, Lahari, Manjaro, Nirosa, Jhalo, Gujaro, Piyosa and Belosa. At a camp at Partabpur attended by Hill Maria from Padalibhum, the *leyur-gaita* of three

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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village dormitories were present. All were Padali by clan from Padali villages. Their dormitory mates were respectively Lahari, a Nuroti girl, Jaliaru, an Usendi girl, and Nirosa, a Nuroti girl; and despite their different designations, these girls were the head-girls of their villages in virtue of their boys' ranks. Another Usendi village in Padalibhum called its head boy Silledar, and his mate was Jhelo, a Padali girl. All four stated freely that they expected ultimately to marry their mates, and that they and all the other dormitory boys often had sexual intercourse with their girls.

The dormitory in these *parganas*, as among the neighbouring Murias, is really a school for training the youth of both sexes in conjugal and social duties and in the lore of the clan; the dormitory office-bearers are practically prefects and monitors. The headman and other elders of the villages frequently call on the head-boy for the help of his boys and girls in field-work; but here they are not paid wages, as among the Murias, but are only fed by those for whom they are working. They are also asked to help in thatching houses and building granaries. In weddings the girls are expected to sing, and boys to collect fuel and leaves for cups, and both have to dance; they have similar functions at the various new-eating festivals. The head-boy imposes fines for unjustifiable absence from the dormitory, or from weddings and festivals, or general disobedience of his orders or those of other office-bearers, a bottle of *mahua* spirit being the usual penalty, the cost of which falls upon the parents. The head-boy's mate has similar powers of fining other girls. At the nightly meetings of boys and girls at the dormitory there are dancing in season, tale-telling, singing and games, and from an early age boys are given practical lessons in sexual intercourse.

B. Bison-horn Marias

The information which I was able to collect on this subject among the Bison-horn Marias is much less full than that given above for the Hill Marias, and needs further testing and considerable supplementing.

During pregnancy the mother carries on her ordinary work. The only note which I have of any disability attaching to pregnancy is that when the flesh of animals slain in the *weta* ceremonial hunts is divided up and eaten, no share may be given to the husband of a wife who either is pregnant or has her monthly period. In most Bison-horn villages there is no menstruation hut, and in their houses there is no menstruation room. A few villages near the foot of the Abujhmar hills have a hut where young girls are

[see cat. 116, pp. 425-426. - Analyst]

THE MURIA'S ATTITUDE TO SEX

For it is not considered proper for the older boys to have congress with a motiari till she has passed the menarche. 'Real happiness only comes when you are both mature. Of course the kids do it, but without the falling of water there's little pleasure. It is like eating a raw fruit. There is no sweetness in it. It is like rice without salt.' This judgement comes from Kajen; another is from Kabonga. 'To try to have a girl before she is mature is as hard as for a pig to dig up roots. Sometimes it manages it; it gets the root up and enjoys it. But it prefers its ordinary food.' The Kotwar of Temrugaon said, 'The first time I did it was with a little girl and it was very painful. She didn't like it either. One ought not to dig in the field of an immature girl, for one's *pulu* (digging-stick) may get damaged.'

But after a girl's first menstruation, said Raunu of Jhakri, 'everyone plans to be the first'. Even now, however, the girl must not be forced or hurried; she must be wooed, persuaded, loved into yielding. Sometimes girls who are afraid of intercourse succeed in resisting the chelik for a long time. Often the first serious sexual experience of a girl is during a marriage, when everyone is excited and perhaps a little drunk, and no one asks questions or notices what is going on.

The ghotul leaders do not interfere unduly with the young children, but they see that they receive proper sexual training and instruction. 'As a young bullock is broken to the plough, so a young boy is taught.' The evidence for this sort of statement is best presented in actual 'documents'. Here is one from Kapsi.

> A big girl teaches a little boy by letting him fondle her breasts and hug her. Then she opens and spreads her legs and makes the little boy lie on her breasts. She shows him how to open her clothes and insert the little penis with his hand. The first time the boy doesn't know what to do and the juice comes out too soon. But the next day she says, 'You only pressed me last night, nothing was done properly. I had no pleasure'. The boy replies, 'Today I'm really ready; now I know what to do'.

In Munjmeta, the Melia recalled how he learnt to perform the sexual act from the very descriptions of the older boys. And in Markabera, the Diwan said,

> A little boy doesn't need to be taught anything. Does a young crab have to be taught how to dig earth? But the elder boys generally tell them how to do it. When the little boys tell them their secrets and how they tried but failed, the older chelik show them the best way. The older girls do the same for the little girls. Sometimes older girls who get fond of little boys teach them themselves. But we learn everything by being in the ghotul. How can the little boys check themselves? Who doesn't feel a desire to eat when he sees people enjoying a feast in his presence?

Thus from a very early age the young chelik and motiari are trained in sexual technique, both by example and by actual instruction. A boy does not approach his marriage bed a virgin, but neither does he go to it a fool.

The immediate sexual approach and the technique of copulation practised by chelik and motiari are conditioned by the circumstances of ghotul life. Normal sexual congress should take place within the ghotul. It is believed that this precaution lessens the chances of conception (there is a 'safe region' rather than a 'safe period'); it protects boy and girl from the calamitous interference of magic; and it imposes a certain degree of restraint and discipline.